

LACDMH HOSTS SEVENTH ANNUAL HOUSING INSTITUTE

By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Affairs Director



The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) hosted the seventh annual Housing Institute, entitled *Health Comes Home: Building Community and Lives*. The two-day event took place on Tuesday, June 10th and Wednesday, June 11th at the California Endowment in downtown Los Angeles. More than 300 participants took part in this year's Housing Institute.



Mark Parra, LACDMH Health Analyst, served as Master of Ceremonies, introducing LACDMH Chief Deputy Director Robin Kay, Ph.D., who welcomed all attendees.

"I am inspired every year when I attend the Housing Institute. It is wonderful to see hundreds of dedicated people who are working to solve the problem of homelessness in Los Angeles County," Dr. Kay said.



Dr. Kay introduced Zev Yaroslavsky, L.A. County Supervisor, Third District, who spoke on the importance of providing homes for those in need. Supervisor Yaroslavsky and William Pavao, Executive Director, California Tax Credit Allocation Committee, were honored by the Housing Institute for the major contributions in helping those living on the margins of society.

The keynote address on Tuesday was from Iain de Jong, President and C.E.O., OrgCode Consulting, Inc., who explored the definition of community and discussed theories of looking at homelessness in a different way; addressing first the needs of an individual, as opposed to offering what is currently available.



On the importance of the conference, Maria Funk, PH.D., District Chief, LACDMH Housing, said: "DMH hosts the Housing Institute to bring people together to share best practices, learn from each other, problem solve the challenges we face in ending

homelessness and celebrate the successes of people who have transitioned from homelessness to a home."



The Housing Institute allows participants to learn more about how to finance housing communities, and partner with housing developers, property management, supportive services and mental health providers. The goal of the Housing Institute is to provide private companies and public agencies with information on how to build permanent supportive housing for the homeless and mentally ill.

Attendees were offered dozens of workshops during the two days, including how to finance supportive housing, overcoming barriers to housing, information on fair housing laws and rights of persons with mental disabilities, resources for homeless individuals and families, integrating housing and services for veterans, and support and housing for older adults who are homeless.



Special thanks go to this year's sponsors: Meta Housing Corporation, the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), Wells Fargo, Alpha Construction, Bank of America, PATH Ventures, Union Bank, Walton Construction Services, Enterprise, National Equity

Fund, Chase Bank, Nu-Way Mattresses Corp., and SRO Housing Corporation, Inc. Affordable Living for the Aging, Shelter Partnership, Inc., the Association of Community Human Service Agencies (ACHSA), Christine Ferguson, M.A. Program Design & Implementation Specialist, and Jovenes, Inc. With everyone's help and sponsorships, they provided information and resources on housing for populations that need it the most.

